

**Sudbury Public Schools
Sudbury, Massachusetts
School Committee Regular Meeting
Wednesday May 18, 2011**

Present: Susan Iuliano, Chairperson; Jeff Beeler, Vice Chairman;
Dr. Rich Robison, Lisa Gutch, Ellen Winer Joachim

Also Present: Dr. John Brackett, Superintendent; Robert Milley, Assistant Superintendent; Mary Taylor, SEA

Open Session

Susan Iuliano called the meeting to order at 7:37 p.m. The meeting was taped for public access broadcast.

1. Reorganization of the School Committee

(a) Welcome new Member Ellen Winer Joachim

Susan Iuliano welcomed new Member-elect, Ellen Winer Joachim, as well as incoming Superintendent, Dr. Anne Wilson.

(b) Selection of a Member to serve as Chair and another to serve as Vice-Chair

VOTED: On a motion by Susan Iuliano, seconded by Lisa Gutch, to appoint Jeff Beeler as School Committee Chairman. The vote was 4–0 in favor. Mr. Beeler abstained, but stated his willingness to serve.

VOTED: On a motion by Lisa Gutch, seconded by Jeff Beeler, to appoint Susan Iuliano as Vice Chairperson. The vote was 5–0 in favor.

(c) Assignment of Liaisons, Subcommittees, and Delegate to MASC

The Committee reviewed the current assignments and proposed appointments for the upcoming year. The Committee will vote on its selections at its next Regular Session.

(d) School Committee Meeting Schedule

VOTED: On a motion by Jeff Beeler, seconded by Ellen Joachim, to approve the schedule of School Committee meetings for 2011-2012 as presented, with the deletion of the July 13, 2011 meeting. The vote was 5–0 in favor.

2. School Choice

VOTED: On a motion by Rich Robison, seconded by Jeff Beeler to decline participation in the School Choice Program for 2011-2012. The vote was 5–0 in favor.

3. Wellness Report

Wellness Curriculum Specialist Betsy Grams presented summary data from the 2010 MetroWest Adolescent Health Survey, the Sudbury Adolescent Behavior Survey, BMI assessments for select grades, and the School Connectedness Survey.

This is the first year that Sudbury has participated in the MetroWest Adolescent Health Survey, which is administered by Education Development Center, Inc. and is based on the CDC youth risk behavior survey. Nine hundred sixty students in Grades 6–8 participated in the survey, which covers substance use, violence, safety, mental health, sexual behavior, and diet.

Some highlights of the findings include the following:

- Lifetime and current substance use downward trends follow those previously observed for Sudbury students.

- With respect to violence and safety, the survey indicated a significant decrease in the number of students who reported being bullied at school. The survey was administered in October; the typical trend is for bullying behaviors to increase as the school year progresses. That said, Ms. Grams confirmed an overall decrease in reports of aggressive behaviors. The District implemented strong anti-bullying measures—including education and reporting protocols—that are presumed to have played a role in the decline.
- In terms of mental health, a significant number of students reported experiencing stress. Data on specific stressors are not yet available.
- Self-harming behaviors previously showed a steady decline and have leveled in recent years.
- Body Mass Index (BMI) data show that Sudbury students trend comparably to their peers in surrounding communities and the state at both the elementary and middle school level, with approximately 25% of students in the overweight and obese categories.
- In terms of school climate and connectedness, students of color and special education students continue to feel less welcomed generally than other students.

Ms. Grams will provide the Committee with more detailed information as it becomes available. She made several recommendations. With regard to physical fitness, she recommends the use of physical activity as a reward in the classroom, reconvening the Wellness Committee, and collaborative work with the new food services vendor in order to emphasize nutrition and encourage fitness. Dr. Robison recommended that parents of students with atypical eating patterns—in particular, students along the autism spectrum—be represented on the Wellness Committee.

While acknowledging that continued effort is required to enhance school climate, Ms. Grams highlighted the District’s continuing collaboration with anti-bullying expert Stan Davis, which has resulted in increased parent education and staff development, as well as significant increases in students’ feelings of connectedness to their schools.

Jeff Beeler asked if comparisons can be made with data previously collected by the District. Ms. Grams confirmed that in some cases, the questions allow for direct comparison. Mr. Beeler stated his expectation that the individual schools focus their efforts based on the data and work under the direction of Ms. Grams. Ms. Grams stated that regular exchanges with Stan Davis take place by Skype, which aids in setting the agenda.

Rich Robison asked if individual schools will have an opportunity to share their successful strategies, citing in particular, the 12% drop in the number of Nixon special education students who reported being hit or threatened within a one-month period.

Lisa Gutch asked how information related to bullying incidents is captured at the schools. Ms. Grams stated that the District uses the IPass system.

Dr. Robison recommended publishing the results of the survey, in particular those relating to student connectedness. At a minimum, the results will be posted on the District website. In addition, The *Town Crier* will be contacted.

7. Open Forum

Julie Stewart, Summer Street, is a Noyes parent who commented that discussions of special needs children usually focus on those on the lower end of the spectrum. She believes that bright students are also special needs students whose needs are often ignored. She asked if there was a possibility for aids or teacher support in extracurricular or homework assignments. The Committee thanked Ms. Stewart for her comments and acknowledged their mission to

address the needs of all students and all types of learners. Assistant Superintendent Bob Milley noted the District's support of math and science clubs, the differentiated instruction at the grade level, and general receptivity of classroom teachers to offer additional challenge if requested. Mr. Milley invited Ms. Stewart to contact him directly to share her ideas.

4. Evaluation and Award of School Transportation Contract

VOTED: On a motion by Rich Robison, seconded by Lisa Gutch, to award a three-year contract for student transportation services for Sudbury Public Schools, effective July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2014, to First Student, Inc. in the total amount of \$3,916,691 (total of SPS and LSRHS) plus the cost of athletic/field trips at the prices bid, with the option to renew for up to two additional one-year terms at the prices included in its bid for each of those years. The vote was 5-0 in favor.

VOTED: On a motion by Susan Iuliano, seconded by Rich Robison, to authorize Jeff Beeler to sign the transportation contract at a later date on behalf of the School Committee. The vote was 5-0 in favor.

11. Members' Forum

Mary Taylor announced that the Scholarship Committee's Softball Bonanza fundraiser is scheduled for 5:00 this Friday at Featherland Field.

5. SPS FY12 Draft Goals and Strategies

Superintendent Brackett presented a draft of the District's Goals, developed in collaboration with SALT. He asked for the Committee's feedback on the draft, which will be circulated next to the entire District, then returned to the Committee for its approval.

The Committee noted that some previously detailed goals, such as liaising with LS and science curriculum development, are no longer listed. Superintendent Brackett stated that these efforts are ongoing and/or becoming part of standard practices; the enumerated goals are those warranting particular emphasis and resources moving forward.

6. School Committee Report

None.

8. Superintendents Report

(a) New State Teacher/Administrator Evaluation Requirements

Superintendent Brackett circulated a memo from DESE Commissioner Mitchell Chester relating to evaluations, as well as proposed regulations on the evaluation of educators.

(b) Donations

Superintendent Brackett provided a report to the Committee detailing proposed donations from the Loring PTO to the school. Among the proposed items are a laptop cart for Grade 3, three ActivBoards, three classroom computers, and updates to Literacy and classroom libraries.

VOTED: On a motion by Jeff Beeler, seconded by Lisa Gutch, to accept with thanks the donations from the Loring PTO to the school, as outlined. The vote was 5-0 in favor.

VOTED: On a motion by Jeff Beeler, seconded by Lisa Gutch, to accept with thanks a donation of \$50,000 from the Jack and Mae Rosenberg Charitable Trust in support of the Aspirations Program.

(c) Recognitions

Superintendent Brackett announced that a team of seventh-grade students will participate in the Destination Imagination global competition in Tennessee. The students are Alex

Armour, Jacob Beyloune, Isaac Klein, Sam Neil, and Sam Shealy. The team is coached by Lisa Armour and Elizabeth Shealy. Each student will receive an “Improving on Excellence” certificate.

(d) Bill Schedule
None.

(e) Personnel Actions
As outlined in the Personnel Packet.

9. Minutes

VOTED: On a motion by Jeff Beeler, seconded by Lisa Gutch, to approve the minutes of the March 23, 2011 Regular Session. The vote was 4–0 in favor.

VOTED: On a motion by Jeff Beeler, seconded by Lisa Gutch, to approve the minutes of the April 6, 2011 Regular Session as amended. The vote was 4–0 in favor.

VOTED: On a motion by Jeff Beeler, seconded by Lisa Gutch, to approve the minutes of the April 27, 2011 Regular Session as amended. The vote was 4–0 in favor.

11. Communications

As outlined in the Communications Packet and additionally: a communication related to a court case involving non professional status teachers; a letter from NESDEC consultant Art Bettencourt congratulating the District on its appointment of Anne Wilson as Superintendent; an email communication from Town Planner Jody Kablack regarding a public forum on the Route 20 sewer project, scheduled for May 25. Ms. Kablack requested participation by a Member of the School Committee.

With regard to the Route 20 sewer project, Jeff Beeler emphasized the Committee’s responsibility to ensure the integrity of school property and the safety of students. He also stated his opinion that the District express its interest in understanding the project funding model and user assessments in order to determine if there is a mechanism for compensating the District for the use of property at the middle school. The Committee agreed by consensus that Mr. Beeler can speak on behalf of the Committee at this forum, including particular mention of the funding structure.

11. Members’ Forum

The Committee confirmed for Dr. Brackett that a class gift of a gaga pit from the Loring fifth grade does not require a vote of approval. The gift is under the dollar threshold. Facilities management has approved the location and Business and Finance Director Mary Will has confirmed that the gift is acceptable with regard to liability.

Rich Robison reported that the Senate budget came out today. He noted that circuit breaker was reduced from the House side and that amendments to restore it will likely follow.

Lisa Gutch expressed an interest in seeing the Committee reach out to preschool parents through coffees or other mechanisms.

12. Adjourn

On a motion by Jeff Beeler, seconded by Lisa Gutch, to adjourn the Regular Session. The vote was 5–0 in favor. The time was 10:58 p.m.

Yes Susan Iuliano
Yes Jeff Beeler
Yes Rich Robison
Yes Lisa Gutch

Yes Ellen Joachim

Submitted by Sheila Cusolito, Recording Secretary